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—New Atmosphere in Leipzig—

East Germans Growing Resigned to Primacy, Permanence of Communism

By Gaston Coblentz
Herald Tribune News Service

LEIPZIG, East Germany, Feb. 9—The East German Communist regime is showing signs of consolidating itself more firmly than at any time since the war and providing substance to Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's assertion that the postwar era has given birth to two Germanys.

This is the most striking impression gained by visitors to this year's large industrial fair at the East German city of

Leipzig, where a fatalistic acceptance of Communist rule by many East Germans has begun to replace the crisis atmosphere of earlier years.

The East German Communists clearly consider themselves more secure than in past years. They seem to feel less surrounded by a sea of active popular hatred, although refugees and migrants are still leaving for the Bonn republic at a rate of almost 100,000 a year.

There is perceptibly less strain in the air, both among the German Communist officials and in the population. One encounters far less of the violent anti-Communist talk that was always heard here before. Instead one finds a considerable number of people who explain that it is becoming possible to get along.

At Leipzig—the same is reported to be true elsewhere in East Germany—the ingredi-

ents of this change are as follows:

Living standards of the 16 million East Germans have improved considerably. People eat better and dress better. They are buying furniture and acquiring more goods. Many of them are again beginning to have something to lose.

The city is still dreary and depressing, but several degrees less so than at any time in the recent past. The facades of hundreds of homes and of

fice structures have a new coat of clean plaster. New apartment buildings are going up in growing numbers.

Equally important is a sub-surface change that has been caused by the shift in the world balance of power since the first Soviet sputnik, two-and-a-half years ago.

The idea seems to be gaining ground among the East Germans that the Soviet Union rather than the West may represent the wave of the

future whether one likes it or not. This has produced a certain inclination to make one's personal peace with the Communists. If free elections were to be held in East Germany, the Communists would lose. But every East German knows that free elections are not going to be held.

In short the mood is one of regret that things did not turn out the other way.